

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 BAGHDA 00524 210640Z

14-11

ACTION SY-02

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 NEA-06 EB-03 INR-05 CIAE-00 NSC-05

NSCE-00 /036 W

----- 118776

R 161100Z MAY 75

FM USINT BAGHDAD

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1988

INFO AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

C O N F I D E N T I A L BAGHDAD 524

LIMDIS

BEIRUT FOR RSO

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: OSEC, IZ

SUBJECT: INTERROGATION OF LOCAL EMPLOYEE

1. AROUND MIDNIGHT MAY 3 THREE IRAQI SECURITY MEN WENT TO HOME OF LOCAL EMPLOYEE FSL-3 KRIKOR TOPAKIAN. ACCORDING TO KRIKOR, THEY SPENT NEARLY THREE HOURS THOROUGHLY SEARCHING THE HOUSE, BUT APPARENTLY FOUND NOTHING OF INTEREST TO THEM. THEY THEN GRILLED KRIKOR ON HIS ACTIVITIES AS ASSISTANT TO COMMATT PATRICK KILLOUGH. (SINCE KILLOUGH'S ARRIVAL JANUARY 28 KRKIOR HAS BEEN WORKED FULL TIME AS COMMERCIAL ASSISTANT AND DONE CONSIDERABLE LEG WORK WITH STATE ORGANIZATIONS AND OTHER COMMERCIAL ESTABLISHMENTS. HE WAS ALSO VERY ACTIVE HELPING WITH MISSISSIPPI TRADE MISSION (FOR WHICH HE WAS COMMENDED BY BOTH ME AND KILLOUGH).

2. SECURITY AUTHORITIES ALSO REFERRED TO KILLOUGH'S ACTIVITIES AND HAD ASKED KRIKOR WHAT HE KNEW ABOUT 20 IRAQIS, AT LEAST HALF OF WHICH WERE KNOWN TO KRIKOR AS PRIVATE BUSINESSMEN WHO HAD CALLED AT USINT OR HAD HAD CONTACTS WITH U.S. PRIVATE FIRMS, AND SOME OF WHOM SECURITY AUTHORITIES ALLEGED WERE NOT LEGITIMATE BUSINESSMEN. LIST INCLUDED NAMES OF ALL PRIVATE SECTOR BUSINESSMEN WHO ASSISTED USINT WITH MISSISSIPPI TRADE MISSION.

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3. KRIKOR WAS AS USUAL WARNED BY SECURITY MEN NOT TO DISCUSS SEARCH AND INTERROGATION WITH ANYONE. HE WAS UNDERSTANDABLY SHAKEN (HAVING SPENT SEVERAL MONTHS IN JAIL SHORTLY AFTER 1968 COUP) AND IT TOOK HIM SEVERAL DAYS BEFORE HE DECIDED TO TELL ME OF INCIDENT WITH REQUEST THAT HE CURTAIL HIS ACTIVITIES OUTSIDE USINT.

4. I HAVE DISCUSSED THIS MATTER WITH KILLOUGH AND WE HAVE AGREED THAT (A) KRIKOR WILL LIMIT HIS ACTIVITIES FOR TIME BEING TO DEALING ONLY DIRECTLY WITH GOVERNMENT ORGANIZATIONS ON ROUTINE MATTERS (E.G. PICKING UP TENDERS); (B) KILLOUGH WILL SLOW DOWN HIS OWN HIGHLY COMMENDABLE ACTIVITIES PARTICULARLY WITH PRIVATE BUSINESSMEN; AND (C) USINT WILL AVOID ESTABLISHING WORKING RELATIONSHIP WITH PRIVATE AND EVEN OFFICIAL IRAQIS UNLESS WE HAVE ADEQUATE REFERENCE OR ARE CONVINCED THAT THEY ARE REPUTABLE.

5. COMMENT: THIS INCIDENT, ACCURATELY REFLECTS CONTINUING SUPER-VIGILANCE OF IRAQ SECRET POLICE, BUT DOES NOT APPEAR TO BE DIRECTED AT USINT (AS PREVIOUS SUCH INCIDENTS WERE) NOR EVEN AT DEVELOPMENT OF U.S'S-IRAQI COMMERCIAL RELATIONS. THERE IS APPARENTLY SOME SUSPICION ABOUT COMMATT KILLOUGH AS A NEW OFFICIAL AMERICAN ON THE SCENE AND HIS ENERGETIC EFFORTS TO PROMOTE U.S. COMMERCIAL INTERESTS. HOWEVER, MAIN CONCERN OF SECRET POLICE SEEMED DIRECTED AT PRIVATE IRAQIS AND THEIR INCREASING ROLE AS MIDDLE MEN BETWEEN FOREIGN FIRMS AND GOVERNMENT ESTABLISHMENTS AND POSSIBLY AS BAG MEN FOR CORRUPT OFFICIALS. IF THIS ANALYSIS IS CORRECT, MEASURES WE HAVE TAKEN TO KEEP USINT, AND PARTICULARLY ITS RELATIONSHIP WITH IRAQIS, OPEN AND ABOVE SUSPICION SHOULD BE ADEQUATE TO ALLAY CONCERN OF SECURITY AUTHORITIES.
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